

**Even Start** was founded on the belief that strengthening children's relationships with their parents and enriching their literacy environments would have a positive impact on children's learning and their performance in school and in life. When parents understand the connection between the ways they talk, play with and touch their young children and their children's growth and development, they can turn ordinary experiences into learning experiences.

A parent or other primary caretaker's education level is a strong indicator of a child's literacy level. And while a parent's income and marital status are also both important predictors of a child's success in school, neither is as significant as whether a parent or other primary caretaker completed high school. As evidenced by a study by the National Center for Children and Poverty, the poverty rate for children under the age of six directly correlates to the education level of their better-educated parent. Even Start Family Literacy program services help families break the cycle of low literacy and poverty. Even Start addresses the literacy needs of both children and parents.

There is now a consistent definition of family literacy in the four federal laws, which govern family literacy. The Reading Excellence Act, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Workforce Investment Act, and Head Start Act define family literacy services as services "of sufficient intensity in terms of hours, and of sufficient duration, to make sustainable changes in a family, and that integrate all of the following activities:

- Interactive literacy activities between parents and their children;
- Training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children;
- Parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency; and
- An age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences."

Our office supports developmentally and instructionally appropriate curriculum models for Early Childhood teachers and Parenting/Family Literacy personnel in our state:

- Creative Curriculum
- Equipped for the Future
- High Scope
- Montessori
- MotheRead
- Parents As Teachers
- Parent-Child Home
- Project Approach
- Project Approach

**Equipped For the Future** is a new approach to adult education. It provides a framework for instruction and assessment that is linked to achievement of real life outcomes and helps learners perform more effectively in their roles as parents, family members, citizens and community members and workers. EFF is based on research supported by the National Institute for Literacy.